get to Marseilles about
9.30 & leave again
about 11.30. They put
on a restaurant car
in which you can breakfast
easily before reaching
Marseilles. So that is no need
to dash out anywhere for food.

Villa Corsica
Cassis

37, GORDON SQUARE,
W.C.1
MUSEUM 5598.

March 17

You have to look very sharp at Cassis as the train only waits a few seconds & doors won't open easily. Your VG

My Belly.

This letter is partly on business. Would you be so very kind when you come as to bring some paints for me & Duncan. which we will order & be sent straight to you from Miss Shea. Fifty St. They will be very bulky & I hope won't be a bore. One can't get these colours so well here. Also could you, if it's not too much trouble, bring a W. (or less) of Chinia Ica. which one can't get here either. I will order that to be sent to you from the Stores.

I forgot when I wrote the other day to tell you that I was very much flattered & interested by your criticisms on my paintings. The only ones I have had. I rather think the show must have been a complete failure financially - at least I have heard nothing about it. However it was a humble affair. only a few sketches executed immediately at the last moment from last summers sketches - I don't think I'm

by any means "masters of the phrase" as you say - But the large works you require are slowly being produced. Perhaps you will wish they weren't if you are asked to house many more caryatids (did you like in Nice?) I have a very large sculpture affair on hand in London some day it may appear. (However we must consult Spencer in size. I am interested in your liking Breughel - the one artist I cannot appreciate. For I love no doubt in vain. Roger always tells me how good he is. But I can't really bring myself to like him. So there must be some peculiar literary fascination in him.

Roger has written at last - It seems to think he may possibly come here too. But I don't know when. He seems swamped in committees & lectures. We are all getting very much excited as the prospect of your arrival draws near. But I daresay you won't be half as much pleased to see me as I to see you - Angelica says she is punishing you for smuggling by not writing the fascinating letter she would otherwise have written - Perhaps however she'll be kind to you when she sees you.

Do you want me to order anything to meet you at the station? One can come here by bus - & I think they'll bring luggage in a trailer behind. Or I can order a car. Do you set here on the 31st at about 12.30 from Marseilles? If you come by the night express you

T. PARSONS 2.2.73

(146)

Villa Corsica
Cassis.

(1927)

Apr 16

My Billy

Your first letter has come. & I suppose you expect answers. Though why you should I can't think for I know you never read them & why should you? I'll try just to give practical answers to some of your questions however.

1. I went to the oculist who seemed competent & said it wasn't my eyes themselves, which is a blessing. but only inflammation round them & wet services. He gave me various lotions etc which I use & which I hope will soon cure them. but it seems difficult to get quite rid of this tiresome disease — you must go. if it's open, as I seem to remember it is only one day a week, to the great Rag Market in the Piazza dei Fiori. where one can get lovely stuffs (I got my famous red silk there) lace & all sorts of things. Quite here

to bargain. If you ever go to St Peters you may manage to find by the side of the river, on the opposite bank, some time before you get to St Peters some good antiquity shops - I think there are several with frames etc outside. Quite kind lots of china etc inside. We got quantities of things there. When I can get hold of Duncan I'll try to give you less vague directions & also tell you about eating places. Once we generally went to was called I think Nepi & was near the Hotel de Russie.

One certainly ought to spend months in Rome. One would get absorbed & fascinated. & wander about happily for ever in those amazing streets. I don't intend to wait till I'm dying to do it.

I see that we're all being uprooted. in fact all but you inveterate London lovers. see that

London is becoming unlivable in. its too noisy & crowded & hectic altogether. Clive asked us all this evening if we could work there. & we said no. I know you say you can but some unique in your methods. & I daresay even you won't be able to long. I foresee a migration to the south. I only hope all our friends won't follow as they have to Bloomsbury. but its very portable. In five years time I see us with Stracheys. Mortimers. Davidsons & all the rest bobbing in & out of each others & our houses in France or Italy or the South Sea Islands if we decide on them It will suit them a little late, as it has about Sussex & Bloomsbury that those are the places to live in. & I daresay even the Keynes. will settle at our door. Then you'll crow over us. alone in London.

All this afternoon a German female painter planted her easel in our garden & her voice

could be heard shrieking Ja, Ja, ein, mein. Ist ich bin. Other fellow Germans next door. Two English female painters here a few yards down the road. & thousands of others flock at every corner. I daresay you are right in preferring the Roman Catholic religion to them. I am thinking of going to High Mass on Easter Sunday. I always thoroughly enjoy a good Catholic service.

---

Duncan thinks the shops were more or less opposite the Castel S. Angelo. He can't remember the name of the eating place & may be quite wrong. So don't rely on it. Clive says there used to be a good place called the Venezia but that is years ago.

---

We now have Julian, Quentin & Clive here. J & Q sleep in the town & spend the day here. So we're pretty full & I can't think what we shall do when Roger is added on Monday. Angelica is a different creature now Clive is here & no longer clings to me at night & wants constant attention. I'm afraid it means that she really

wants someone to replace Christ.
I wonder how you'd really like the
problem of children added to your
existence. I don't feel at all equal
to dealing with it myself really.
One can't let them be unhappy
but one can't give up one's own
existence to them & one is dragged
between the two sometimes. Julian
is enormously big in every direction
& rather uncouth. But I think one
watching is doing his complexion a
lot of good & he looks rather
magnificent when he gets into
country clothes. Quentin is tall
& very slim & elegant - & I find
him completely sympathetic - as
I think almost everyone does
There is no doubt he's a happily
balanced creature - I see he's getting
excited already about leaving school
Clive suggested putting his name
down for Cambridge as it would
bind him to nothing but he
absolutely refused to hear of it
I suppose in little more than a
year now he'll be settling in
France
Ought one to go to Sicily?
I hope you'll tell me more about it.

Tell me if you think it would suit my tastes, which are not for the wildly romantic as you know. I prefer valleys & hills – unfortunately they generally go together.

I have had no letters to speak of lately – one today from Maynard: who has been in Paris with Lydia for about 2 days. I wrote almost entirely about artists' associations business. I shd think he'd be rather cross with Clive's letter in the Nation & say it's much too personal & in the worst of taste.

Nothing more has happened about our studio here as we can't get hold of Col. Read. But I hope Duncan may see him tomorrow.

I might let you get another letter from me in a day or two.

My best efforts shall be spread before you in return – that's all I can say. But if you repent of your bargain you can always stop.

My love to Leonard

Yours VW

(147)

(1927)

Villa Corsica
Cassis
April 23

My Billy.

Im not sure that writing in difficulties doesnt lend a certain spice to your pen - at any rate you must let them put you in favour of France at the expense of Italy. I daresay you will understand that remark but it has a meaning. You seem to run into far more society than we do. I expect your next friend will be Bob. & then we dont Logan. All the schoolmasters too & Sicily of course for their holiday. Things that is people are on the point of changing here. Clive goes on Tuesday. Roger comes tomorrow. He was to have come before, but it seems that Ellie nearly killed him like you with her new brand of innoculations. & he couldnt start as soon as he meant to. Your nephews

leave next Friday, just about the time I suppose when you will be returning too. Question will spend a few days in Paris & so back to London on May 3rd & to school on May 4th. If you feel inclined to see him perhaps you'd get into touch with him then. He'll be at NO 50 on the night of the 4th-3rd. Since they have been here we have had a great deal of male conversation at meals - endless discussions as to whether things fall at the same rate at which they go up & geographical questions etc. also grand battles between the artists & the intellectuals. Julian is violently anti-artist at the moment. He & I play chess after dinner as a rule which keeps him quite employed to some extent.

I see that all will be changed by the advent of Roger Lubbock.
We went to lunch with Brial at Marseilles one day. Do you know him? He is amusing & tells quite amusing stories. He paints unluckily. But is really not a painter but an intellectual We had to look at his pictures however, & do the best we could. & talk to his Spanish wife who talks almost unintelligible French. We had a delicious lunch & were taken to see one of the lovely Gardens that grow round Marseilles with an old house in the middle of it My suspenders broke & had it not been for my provident habit of carrying a supply of safety pins with me I should have had an awkward day of it
Tommy & Julian did not confide in me. All I heard was from Douglas. She said they seemed to get on quite well as man & wife. They shared a room & bed & he slept alone & I suppose Julia finds Tommy more attractive

than you do - They are a slightly
curious couple however. I dont think
either is in love with the other but
perhaps they supply wants in each
other - I should find either terribly
uncomfortable to live with.
I dont know if you like getting
letters in Rome - It's rather melan-
choly I think that you will so
soon be returning to Bloomsbury
Perhaps however excitements will
be awaiting you which will seem
to you to outdo the joys of
chastity which you suffered from
here - at least I suppose that
was the cause of your back-
handers? Or was the Italian
Sirls unkind? Anyhow you see
how Duncan & I smart - It is
terrible to be light chaste &
dowdy when one would so much
like to be neither - Perhaps
Ottoline will be in full swing
& provide new hunting grounds
& Vita will soon be back. So
do write & tell me of all the
latest scandals. also if there
any news of the parakeets one.
Duncan saw Col. Tead at last
& discussed the studio. which

(147 ii)

he is willing to put in order &
let for a very small rent. So
I suppose we shall come here again
& see what its like. I think
if we had a car there are great
advantages in this as a central
place. as its fairly civilized &
I live in & we could easily get
to all the loveliest places.
Now that Anne is here Angelica
is perfectly happy & contented
which is a great blessing & I
am much freer. I should have
to try to get some other child I
think as a companion for her if
we came again - Otherwise we
seems (he as well off here as
we would be likely to be in
any of the other places - So
I hope if you & Leonard decide
to face France again next
year you'll come here - I
agree with you in liking the
Italians - only the peasant class
that is - the middle classes are
absolutely imbecile & intolerable
but I like the French too - I hope

we come from Patelli & de l'Etang.
I often feel far more akin to
them than to the Stephens of
Aberdeen who would be as
much horrified by us – even by
me I suppose in spite of my
chastity – marmoreal is it? –
(but it rankles!) as by the
Patelli –

Angelica will, I am afraid,
revert completely to the lowest
of her forbears – in fact Duncan
fears she may take to the stage
She now does most brilliant
music hall turns invented by
herself & I see shall be only too
conscious of her own success
& perhaps unable to resist trading
on it. It might be more interesting
than having another painter
in the family.

Please write – I paint
many pictures for you to choose
from.

Yours VB

(148)

Villa Corsica
Cassis
Bouches du Rhone

1927
May 3

My Billy.

It is a work of absolute heroism to write to you. All my writing paper has been taken by Angelica to write a poem lying on the Rotin lying on the window sill. Then leaving rescued one sheet I sit with moths flying madly in circles round me & the lamp. You cannot imagine what it's like. One night some creature tapped so loudly on the pane that Duncan said "What is that?" "Oh a bat" said Roger "or a bird: but it wasn't man or bird. It a huge moth - half a foot literally across. We had a terrible time with it. My maternal instinct which you deplore so much, wouldn't let me leave it. We let it in. Kept it. Gave it a whole bottle of ether brought from the chemist. all in vain. took it to the chemist who dosed it with chloroform for a day. also in vain. Finally it did die rather the worse for wear. I

I get it - & now - here is another!
a letter specimen. But though
incredibly beautiful I suspect
they're common - perhaps Emperor
moths. Still I know how we would
have blamed our elders for not
capturing such things at all costs
so I suppose I must so through it
all again. Then I remember - dedicate
Falco by experiments with this same
creature & attract all the males in
the neighbourhood by shutting up one
female in a room - just what we
have now done - So probably
soon the house will be full of them.
However you will only tell me its what
comes of allowing instinct to play a
part in personal relationships. What
a lot I could say about the maternal
instinct, but I see also what a
lot about Richard Angelo & Raphael.
I wish you would write a book
about the maternal instinct - In
all my wide reading I have yet
found it properly explored. You
have many opportunities for observation

& you can start with birth, which also has never been described except by men, or did a friend of Ray's do it the other day? - anyhow they never know anything about it naturally. & I could tell you a great deal! Of course it is one of the worst of the passions, animal & remorseless. But how can one avoid yielding to these instincts if one happens to have them. Perhaps you manage to. All I hope to do is to see them for what they are which doesn't do much good. I think however that you may hope that females, with as much good sense as your sister, will manage to be rid of the maternal instinct by the time their children are about 14. So you will have to expect another 6 years of it from me. After that it changes. or should change - the young should be kicked out. & mere feeling becomes more rational if not of course its worse than ever

& probably ruins the lives of both generations. You must want to hear any more about it at present. & will have spoken Michaelis before my letter & my paper will soon be at an end. Is there such small news as we have here. Roger has arrived & seems very well & cheerful & has started several pictures & in fact - it's quite like old times. He has gone off today to Marseilles to have a tooth out after a night of agony, also like old times. But he thinks nothing of it. I should be in despair.

A letter from Mary came for Clive yesterday. which I had to send on - It was tantalising wasn't it? Evidently she doesn't know he was in Paris - & I suppose she is seeking a rapprochement. I hope you may find out something. He says he is going back to London on the 8th -

(1481i)

He also says Mr Bell has had a slight operation, I don't know what for, but it sounds as if he was rather ill & as he is 77 I suppose anything may be serious. But they're really incredibly tough.

What other news is there? Helen threatened to settle in Flea Cottage, between us & Filton - Luckily she can't get it, but I think of trying (and from Ld. Sape & building up. With Sussex be habitable crop? Where can we go?

We shall I suppose return in about 3 weeks. & except for one or two favourites I can't say I look forward to meeting my kind again - It is terrible to think of plunging back after 4 months here - worse than a cold bath - I shudder at the thought. I have had a

fascinating letter from Sunny. Full of tags & quips. She seems to be making a char. a-banc tour in France. Perhaps Clive will meet her in Paris.

The world die around me - I can't face (even my typer. when does the Lighthouse come out? Please don't forget my wd del for 2 copies.

I might as well be in a lighthouse for the world

How are you enjoying Calefax & Co?

Did you get 2 letters from me in Rome?

Ill decorate Rodwell or a Gramophone or anything you like & be most generous with my work if only you'll continue to do your part

Love VW

(149)

May 4 1927

Wednesday

Your letter has just come & I must find another dirty half sheet to put it in & try to exculpate myself. But what is me to do? I really don't feel to blame. It was very difficult not to read aloud bits of your letters & it seemed as harmless as anything could well be. Clive simply raved about your brilliance & we discussed your gifts as a letter writer compared to Mrs Carlyle. All I read were things which had no private interest whatever. In fact I thought you wrote knowing that with Clive & Duncan there I might have to read bits & so didn't write anything that it could be indiscreet to read aloud. I think this really was the case & that the blame must be laid on Clive's inveterate habit of interesting anything into something slightly malicious - as you know & old

Duncan promised to read any bit of your letters again & anyone else you may have any pleasure in having us

(149)

May 4 1927

Wednesday

Your letter has just come & I must find another dirty half sheet to put in & try to exculpate myself. But what is me to do? I really don't feel to blame. It was very difficult not to read aloud bits of your letters & it seemed as harmless as anything could well be - Clive simply raved about your brilliance & we discussed your gifts as a letter writer compared to Mrs Carlyle - All I read were things which had no private interest whatever. In fact I thought you wrote knowing that with Clive & Duncan there I might have to read bits & so didn't write anything that it could be indiscreet to read aloud. I think this really was the case & that the blame must be laid on Clive's inveterate habit of twisting anything into something slightly malicious - as you know & old

Solomon pursuing it you like reserve & suppose me - Duncan read any bit of your letters aloud Anyhow you may have any pages I want

always happens & as happened only the other day when you got into trouble with him & Mary. I think this is most tiresome but simply cant be helped (they & it is again a lesson to me which I admit I ought to have learnt more thoroughly not to give him any apparently quite harmless handle to cavil with). Perhaps it would be best to realise that he cannot really do harm - even now he seems only to have managed to spread the idea that you have always (Italy & dislike it - which no one can believe or be much interested in even unless he has managed to make it more amusing than seems likely. One can hardly prevent him from doing such things any casual extract from a letter might be enough - & I really dont think any one who knows you can pay it much attention. It seems hard that I should suffer - especially now that only [illegible] animals, chat et chien, are in the house - But whenever comes to the worst I will make a

T. PARSONS PARSONS